

To: [REDACTED]
Cc: Cesar Contreras[36373@lapd.online]; Councilmember Rodriguez[councilmember.rodriguez@lacity.org]; 22918@lapd.online[22918@lapd.online]; Dominique Vitti[dominique.vitti@lacity.org]
From: Eve Sinclair
Sent: Sat 12/28/2019 2:45:52 AM
Subject: Homelessness in Sunland-Tujunga
[Care One Pager.pdf](#)

Hello, [REDACTED] Thank you for reaching out to our office. There are multiple issues that you bring up in your email, so I will try to address them all below. In regards to Sunland Park, as you might imagine, the Rec and Parks Department has a limited amount of resources to address encampments throughout all of our local and regional parks across the City of Los Angeles, so regularly have to work to prioritize how they are directing their staff. Due to Hansen Dam Regional Park being located in the Very High Fire Severity Hazard Zone, and us entering fire season which can be a particularly dangerous time for all of our communities here in CD7, our office has been working very closely with RAP, LAPD, the park rangers, LAHSA/LA Family Housing outreach workers, and Sanitation over the past three months to address the many encampments that were located within the Hansen Dam Regional Park area. During that time, they have addressed forty encampments and cleared out over 30 tons of bulky items, waste, and more from Hansen Dam. During that enormous undertaking, their resources were focused on addressing the issues in this extremely fire-vulnerable area. Also, as you likely know, in mid-October, we had the great misfortune to lose Captain Torres, who headed Rec and Park's Homelessness Task Force. The department and our own homelessness teams are still adjusting staffing and workflow following this terrible loss. Our office has met with the rangers directly to discuss addressing encampments at Sunland Park. Following that meeting, the rangers have now held a couple of cleanups at Sunland Park over the course of December.

In regards to homelessness on City streets and other right-of-way areas, I am more than happy to discuss homelessness in Council District 7, how to properly report encampments, and how you can help participate in our continuing efforts to connect our unsheltered constituents with resources to address their homelessness. To begin with, you can find out much about the current state of homelessness in CD7 by reviewing the results of the most recent LAHSA homeless count at <https://www.lahsa.org/data?id=12-count-by-city-council-district>. Our district was one of only two council districts (out of 15) that had a decrease in homelessness from the 2018 Homeless Count (1259) to the 2019 Homeless Count (931). The Councilwoman has strongly advocated for many additional resources to reduce homelessness during this crisis, such as the Safe Parking program started here in Council District 7 last fall, the first in the city to allow RVs. Here is a short video clip about it: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TMF08bti5wM&feature=youtu.be>. From October 1, 2018 to October 1, 2019, North Valley Caring Services enrolled 108 clients into the Safe Parking program. Of these, nearly 40% were seniors, and over 60% were experiencing homelessness for the first time. Through this program, at least 16 were placed into permanent housing, 18 into emergency shelter, and 9 into some form of temporary/transitional housing.

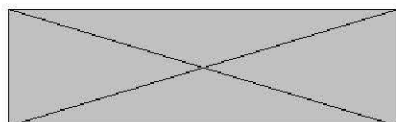
Another critical asset that is still greatly underused right now is the LAHSA Homeless Outreach Portal (<https://www.lahsa.org/portal/apps/la-hop/>), where people can report any encampment, vehicle dwelling, or homeless person directly to outreach workers. Here's another quick video on using LA-HOP: https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=g4vQjsSa3uY These outreach workers are doing the work to connect with every reported instance and to begin the process to move people from homelessness to shelter and to connect them with services. This is the beginning of the journey to truly solve the problem by bringing people indoors rather than the band-aid fix of pushing encampments or vehicles from one area to another. While people should still continue to report encampments either through the 311 system or directly to our Council office to activate Sanitation services and LAPD, it is equally important to report encampments through the Homeless Outreach Portal to connect our unsheltered constituents with outreach teams, so they can be connected with many other resources coming online shortly, like the Sylmar Armory which is scheduled to open as an 85-bed women's shelter in early 2020, or the Summit View Permanent Supportive Housing project, which will bring nearly 50 units of housing for homeless veterans to Lake View Terrace, that is scheduled to break ground in February. Though some homeless individuals may initially refuse shelter, outreach workers visit regularly to build trust, establish a relationship, ascertain needs, and often are eventually able to help those that were initially shelter-resistant move into a shelter that addresses their needs. We also currently have the Pacoima winter shelter open during these coldest months, which provides 138 beds on a first-come, first-served basis. Outreach workers can make these resources available to the members of the encampments they visit.

The communities and residents that are regularly making these connections will see their homeless achieve this housing, such as several of the people in this video who moved into the new Permanent Supportive Housing facility at the Campus (14 people from Council District 7 - including 8 specifically from Sunland-Tujunga - moved into these apartments just last year): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kEFIRkkupo4>. There are many other ways to help tackle the issue of

homelessness locally, such as volunteering for the 2020 Homeless Count next month (you can sign up at <https://www.theycountwillyou.org/>) or volunteering with our local nonprofit Making It Happen (<https://www.makingithappeninc.org/how-to-help>).

In addition, the City of LA has introduced a new CARE program, which I am including a one-pager on below as well, which has the benefit of dedicating an entire Sanitation and outreach team specifically to Council District 7, enabling us to have access to encampment cleanup 20 days a month, as opposed to 2 days a month which we previously had through the Clean Streets LA program, which means that encampments are being addressed in much faster time periods. I want to be clear, though, that these cleanups involve physically cleaning up the area around the tents, providing hygiene services, and also providing outreach services to those living in the encampments. As you have probably heard, the Supreme Court decided this month not to hear the Martin vs. Boise case and review the ruling, which essentially means that the City cannot make it illegal for the homeless to dwell in tents on the sidewalk until many more shelter beds are provided. You can find out more about current law and homelessness in the City of LA here: <https://www.lacityattorney.org/homelessness>. There are indeed rules about when the tents can be 'up' (versus collapsed) on the sidewalk, which is between the hours of 9p and 6a, unless it is raining or below 50 degrees. If you see that tents are up during hours they should not be up, you can report them directly to LAPD at the non-emergency number at 877-ASK-LAPD and they will send a patrol car when available to address these tents. You can also reach out to Officer Contreras (cc'd here), the Senior Lead Officer for Sunland, for help with this. Aside from dwelling on sidewalks, any criminal activity happening (drug dealing, for instance, or car break-ins) should be reported directly to LAPD, either through the emergency number of 911 or through the non-emergency number, depending on the nature of the crime. Without actual calls into the police, or reports being filed at the police station, LAPD cannot direct additional resources to areas that may need it.

The encampment in the 8700/8800 block of Foothill receives regular cleanups now through CARE, with the next cleanup date scheduled for 12/31. We also dispatched our METRO HOPE team this week to move the encampment that had set up on the bus benches there, which they took care of on 12/26. In regards to the Nature Garden, Roger usually reaches out to our office when he needs help with an encampment there. I will drive by tomorrow to report any existing encampment there that needs to be addressed. As a City, we will continue to address these encampments in compliance with the current law, and we will continue to strongly advocate for more temporary and permanent shelter beds to house our homeless community members so they can move off the streets and into shelter. Thank you again for reaching out, and I hope this information is helpful.



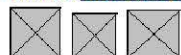
Eve Sinclair, Area Director

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On Thu, Dec 19, 2019 at 11:50 AM RedTango <redtango@tangoland.com> wrote:

I am reaching out to whomever is available to read this at the moment about the dire situation of our community I have written many times to several of you listed here in the past.

Our community is at a crisis point. Foothill Blvd is starting to look like skid row and the park never stays clean for long. Although this is exhausting and thankless work, I continue to call in encampments and make sure the community nature garden on Fenwick stays clean.

There is currently a camper in a bright orange tent sitting in the middle of the garden. This is less than one minute's walk from my home and at the end of a residential street. I have informed the garden caretaker, Roger Klemm, about this issue and once again he will have to be the one to deal with the situation. We cannot call the police and calls to the city for clean up will result in a 6-8 week lead time. It took months and months to extricate the last dug in campers who screamed and yelled at me when I tried to talk reason with them. When they were finally out there were piles of trash and feces to clean up. Come on, already. It's like a community of animals up here.

Beyond that, which we will have to handle on our own, I have called in the tents on Foothill ten times now in the last 18 months. There has been zero progress from these call ins. Again, there is the 6-8 week ramp up time and once the crews come out to offer help and get them off the sidewalk they come back in a few hours. For all of this effort, things are worse now than they were last summer.

The stretch of sidewalk between the Coco's entrance on Foothill and the intersection of Sunland/Foothill is a filthy, dangerous, out of control strip of

tents at this point.

One of my biggest questions: These are help resistant people. They do not want to go into shelters. I have spoken to the very first guy who set up his tent there last summer and has sort of introduced the sidewalk way of living to other local transients..now, it's the norm. He has told me twice he does not want to go into a shelter. Now, we've got a growing stretch of tents, shopping carts and squalor along Foothill and residents are STILL calling to get this cleaned up! Still!

So here's what else I don't understand: If we cannot get them off the sidewalks legally if we don't have shelter, what happens when we DO have shelter and they refuse it? Why is it that a few individuals have the ENTIRE community of thousands of people over a barrel? Is this really where the conversation just hits a wall..if they don't take the shelter and prefer to sit and do drugs in tents, they get to do this as long as they want, a minute's walk from my own front door?

How do you even HAVE a community without rules, structure, accountability and expectations?

There are home owners, business owners, people hard at work in the shops here who are watching their safe and clean community being constantly degraded and there are NO RULES and NO ENFORCEMENT in regards to any of this. Where are the adults? Why are grown men allowed to set this big ugly tent up in a community nature garden simply because they refuse to go into a shelter and WANT to live on the streets? I don't get to live in my house for free. Why do they have the freedom to decline help then set up this dangerous, drug filled subculture right in the middle of where I live and invest in?

Where are the adults here? This is what I just cannot wrap my head around. The wash is over run, our park is a party zone for druggies, Foothill is now a skid row, which resulted in drug sales operating out of one tent and Richard, the heroin dealer, being arrested for cracking someone's head open. This is happening right where we all shop and eat. Again, where are the adults?

The city clean up system is a complete failure, these people know they can come right back and have about 2 months to screw around and do whatever they want before a clean up crew comes. Then, rinse and repeat. And the anger residents are feeling as they are being violated more often is at a boiling point, this isn't just me. Community online groups are filled with people fed up that the law only works one way...to protect people who REFUSE HELP and are dug into our sidewalks and sometimes right in front of our homes now.

Dominique, I called and talked to you several months ago for you to clarify what exactly the tent laws are now, because at the time you did not know. is it legal to have a tent up, obstructing the sidewalk, 24/7...forever? What exactly is the law? Does everyone now get to set up a tent anywhere they want and sell/do drugs in it, forever?

Eve, you never respond to my e-mails but I will continue to reach out. You know I painted that DOT box at the corner, you and your daughter came by once and helped out a bit. Have you seen what that area looks like now, just a few years later? I wouldn't get near that DOT box now if you paid me

What is going on? I get there are ACLU rulings but other cities don't look like this. Glendale doesn't, Montrose, La Crescenta, La Canada don't. How are they able to follow ACLU rules."

Why can't we? Why are all of us held hostage by a few people who want to lay around on the sidewalk, steal bikes, do drugs, pester people for money and even masturbate in front of children? Is there some resignation that people here in Sunland don't mind this? Is it assumed we have some sort of unique tolerance and patience for dangerous crime and public drug use? We are SICK of it! I just don't get why other communities are able to within the law keep a lid on things and we're dealing with a growing cesspool of people who have no accountability and no respect for the community.

Even trying to get photos of the sprawling mess from across the street has resulted in me being screamed at and threatened. In my community. One minute's drive from my own house.

Screamed at and threatened.

I also, while I am here, would like to relay a story about a homeless woman that reaches onto the other side of the spectrum. She is a well known mentally ill individual who does drugs then exposes herself and runs around in traffic. She has been a danger to the community and to herself for some time. In the past week, she was seen running around on Foothill between cars. 911 was called in an attempt to get her off the streets and to safety. They would not attend to the call, and the woman ended up being hit by a car and last I heard, was dying in intensive care. I am still trying to find out what happened to her.

This was so preventable! I am beyond being able to comprehend what is going on here with everything. There always seems to be indifference or excuses and no accountability with any of this. Citizens now are expected to deal with out of control people, try to get them to take their tents down and risk being beaten. Grandmothers have to pull their grandchildren out of ice cream stores when mentally ill druggies come by and start masturbating in front of them.

Yes, this really happened at Baskin Robbins.

If other communities can successfully manage this and stay within all of the limits and rulings that are in the way, why can't we? What is at the core of this ongoing reluctance to get involved with ANY of this issue? Here we are at the end of 2019 and our community is dominated by drop out meth heads who are constantly breaking into our cars and know just how much to steal to evade prosecution. It's not all about them. They don't get to run our community.

Or do they? A homeless person was over heard making a remark after Officer Albert Torres passed away that "now that he is dead he can take the park over."

Are you going to let this happen? Is he right? Or are we finally going to take our city back and fill this place with city pride? We have a brand new shopping center waiting for new tenants and all we get are new tents. HELP US TAKE OUR CITY BACK!

Thank you, have a nice holiday and see you next year.

